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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/031,426

01/18/2002

Chikara Kami

1012-02

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03/31/2005

IP GROUP OF DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY US LLP
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EXAMINER

YEE, DEBORAH

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1742

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/031,426

Applicant(s)

CHIKARA KAMI ET AL

Examiner

Deborah Yee

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1-31-04.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17,18,21 and 22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17,18,21 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

2. Claims 17 and 18 are provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 17 and 18 of copending Application No. 10/655,394.

This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

3. Claims 21 and 22 are provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 21 and 22 of copending Application No. 10/654,775.

This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

4. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

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Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. Claims 17, 18, 21, and 22 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 to 4 of U.S. Patent No. 6,702,904. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they both disclose cold rolled steel sheets having the same alloying constituents whose wt% ranges are overlapping. Note that the overlapping ranges establishes a prima facie case of obviousness because it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select the claimed alloy ranges from the broader disclosure of the prior art because the prior art has the same utility and properties, see MPEP 2144.05. Moreover, patent '904 steel has a structure containing a ferritic phase having an average crystal grain size of 10 microns or less at an area ratio of 50% or more which would suggest the ferrite phase having an average crystal grain diameter of 20 microns or less recited by pending claims 17 and 18, and the ferrite phase having an average crystal grain diameter of 10 microns or less at an area ratio of 80% or more recited by pending claims 21 and 22. Even though patent '904 claim does not disclose a structure additionally containing 5% or more acicular ferrite and the r value of 1.2 or more recited by pending claims 17 and 18 and the additional martensite phase of 2% or more and the r value of 1.2 or more as recited by pending claims 21 and 22, such properties would be expected since compositional limitations are closely met. Also see US Patent '904, lines 55 to 60 of column 4.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over European patent 943696 cited by applicant in IDS dated June 17, 2004.

8. EP'696 in paragraph 17 discloses a cold rolled steel sheet having a composition with alloying constituents whose wt% ranges overlap those recited by the claims; such overlap renders applicant's composition prima facie obvious because it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select the claimed alloy ranges from the broader disclosure of the prior art because the prior art has similar properties of high temperature strength, toughness, bake hardening and drawability.

9. Moreover, similar to present invention, EP'696 in paragraph 20 discloses a ferrite phase having a mean grain size of not larger than 10 microns, and in paragraph 60 discloses a solute (dissolved) N of 0.0015 to 0.01% which is within the claimed dissolved N range of 0.001% or more. Even though prior art does not teach a martensite phase at an area ratio of 2% or more or the r value of 1.2 or more as recited by claim 21, such would be expected since composition and process limitations are closely met and in absence of proof to the contrary.

10. More specifically, note prior art specific alloy J in Tables 6 and 8 having a composition with N/Al of 0.3143 and a dissolved N content of 0.0055% which meets the recited claim except for a slightly higher amount of Al. It is the examiner's position, however, that it would be obvious to use lower amounts of Al in the prior art alloy since a broad Al range of 0.001 to 0.150% is taught. Furthermore since applicant has not demonstrated (e.g. by comparative test data) the criticality of the claimed Al range of 0.02% or less, then it would seem that a composition with 0.02% vs. a composition with slightly more (say 0.035%) Al would depict a mere difference in the proportion of element without any attendant unexpected results, which would not patentably distinguish claims over prior art.

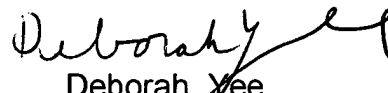
11. In regard to claim 22, EP'696 contains 0.05 to 0.1%Ti.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deborah Yee whose telephone number is 571-272-1253. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6:00 to 2:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Deborah Yee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

dy